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THE UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY IN THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

By

(25 August 1952) The Honorable David K. E. Bruce

GENERAL CRAIG: We are very fortunate to have with us today to inaugurate our course in international affairs the Under Secretary of State. His broad experience in responsible positions of government at home and diplomatic missions abroad, together with his military service in both World Wars, and the practice of law and private business, touches upon practically every element that must be used in the formulation and execution of national policy.

As one of the basic considerations and as an introduction to our course today, we have asked Mr. Bruce to discuss "The United States Foreign Policy in the International Scene". It is with a great deal of pleasure that I welcome to this platform the Honorable David Bruce, Under Secretary of State. Mr. Bruce.

MR. BRUCE: General Craig, gentlemen of the National War College: - The State Department this year is sending twelve of its Foreign Service Officers and seven of its Departmental officers to attend this course. In the formulation of foreign policy there are some matters which can be dealt with by one department, but on the most important ones it requires the conjoint attention of many agencies of government. Obviously, the execution of foreign policy needs the coordination and cooperation of almost all the agencies of government. It is for this reason that the Department of State has taken such an intense interest in what is being done here.

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If you could make foreign policy in a vacuum, it would be admirable, but our past experience, I think, has too often shown -- and especially during the 19th century -- that we entered into commitments which we did not have the power to back up by implementation. I can cite a number of examples of the interdependence of planning and operations by government departments. Perhaps an easy one would be the situation in Indo-China. If the State Department had a very definite policy for that particular area, other agencies, and especially the Defense Department, would have to consider whether the military tools were at hand or available in order to execute what might have been decided on from the standpoint of political planning.

If I may, I shall try this morning to give you a rather brief tour of the horizon of what our problems are and what the present status of our relationships is with the various foreign countries. I don't think it is necessary to go back and to talk about what traditionally our foreign policy has been except to allude to it very briefly. You know that its genesis was at the time of our Revolution when we formed our alliance with France. Without that alliance, which was temporary and only for the purposes of the war, it is very doubtful indeed, viewing it in retrospect, whether we should have gained our independence. But afterwards we never entered into any alliance with foreign nations except in wartime. During periods of peace we relied primarily on our geographic isolation, and secondarily upon the fact, which was not embodied in any alliance, that Great Britain controlled the Atlantic Ocean and to some extent the Pacific Ocean by her command through her fleet over the seas. As a result, the United States was able for a period of almost a hundred years to turn its eyes inward and to develop the resources of this vast continent.

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Two policies are usually spoken of as having been promulgated by the United States Government during the 19th century in the field of foreign affairs. One was the Monroe Doctrine in 1824 which denied foreign countries the right to extend further their establishments in this hemisphere. The second was the Open Door policy in China, enunciated in 1900 by the then Secretary of State, John Hay. As to the first, this was a very bold move. Fortunately for us, we were never required to support this commitment by the use of armed force. We had at our side, through an understanding which was never made explicit in any written document, the assistance of the British. As to the second policy, the Open Door in China, had we been called upon to enforce it, we would have lacked the means to do so.

I doubt very much whether in the evolution of those two doctrines there was any consultation such as now must inevitably, and properly, take place within the Executive Department of Government so that the consequence of what was meditated by the President and the Secretary of State was subjected to the scrutiny of those other departments of government which would have had to play a great part in the enforcement of the doctrines had the need arisen. So I think one might say that during the 19th century we were able to pursue a course of internal development for the most part exempt from any external danger, which made it unnecessary for us to coordinate our policies between several agencies of our Government.

We entered the first World War, as you all recall, in 1917. After that, the generous dream of Woodrow Wilson of the League of Nations was not welcomed by the United States Senate. Nor did the instrument which set up the League of Nations envisage the enforcement of its decrees by military strength. From 1920 to 1940, speaking of foreign policy in the true sense of the word, we

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may be said to have had little if any of a distinctive nature. That isolationism was broken in the autumn of 1941, although there had been anterior acts which had deeply engaged us in a course of action which inevitably led to the later development of what is our now modern and present foreign policy.

We were very largely instrumental not only in conceiving but in bringing into being while the second World War was still in progress the United Nations, of which we have remained a faithful member. That is the very corner stone of our foreign policy -- collective security, collective endeavor and aspiration for peace. That was followed by a long roster of accomplishments in this field -- such as the Marshall Plan, and the arming of other countries through the furnishing of military assistance. I do not speak of them chronologically, but there was our coming into the vacuum which had been created by the decline of British strength in Greece and in Turkey; later on, NATO, a federation (initially for military defense purposes) of the nations of Western Europe; treaties of alliance with the Philippines, with Japan, with New Zealand and Australia, the Rio Pact and a variety of lesser instruments which today mean that we have committed ourselves in almost every area of the world. And if the Middle East Defense Organization comes into being, there will be few nations in the major and more important portions of the world to which we are not allied by some governmental understanding.

So on the basis of that series of commitments which one must regard as permanent as respects our intentions, I shall speak, as I said in the beginning, of some of those portions of the world where areas of strength exist and of others where areas of weakness not only persist but are dangerous to our national welfare.

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Starting with England, the British Empire, as you know, has declined greatly in strength. Large areas, great populations, most considerable resources have been lost to the mother country through the operation of many causes. But that gallant island people, still entirely cohesive, is probably the greatest force in the way of an ally with whom we deal. Its economic position is bad and threatens to become worse. The question posed from the standpoint of foreign policy at this period in relation to the United Kingdom is primarily economic and fiscal. What is needed in order to keep its economy in balance, in health? Obviously some measure of external aid is needed. How much, after close study, are we prepared to give it? That depends not alone on the Executive Branch but more largely upon what action Congress will take in accordance with recommendations made to it at the next session by the Executive Branch. I simply pose that as symptomatic of the way in which conjointly within the different agencies of government we must look at various parts of this foreign scene.

As you cross the Channel to France, you will find that nation in many respects facing the same type of problem which confronts Great Britain. The economy of France, rehabilitated and healthy in most sectors is not capable at the present time without massive external aid of supporting the commitments into which its successive governments have entered. It might well be that if she could relieve herself of the burden of Indo-China France, metropolitan and overseas, would be self-dependent. Such a situation does not exist nor does it seem probable that it will exist in the near future. Therefore, once again, aside from the question of what France will furnish in the way of armed strength in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, you have a study always in progress as to how it can exist at all in health with

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a view to carrying out its world-wide commitments without a large measure of assistance from the United States.

The Italian position is somewhat different from the two that I have mentioned. Chronically overpopulated -- poor in raw resources and materials of almost every kind, dependent on importations for the very livelihood of her people, there is not in prospect, I believe, any possibility of having Italy play the part which is necessary in these various schemes of collective security unless once again a very large amount of financial aid over a period of years can be given to her.

In the rest of Europe you have what is presently an excellent situation in Belgium where order was put into her finances by courageous governmental action almost immediately after the conclusion of the war in Europe. Holland, shattered and torn as never before in all of her history, since the time of the Spanish occupation, due to the native industry of her people has largely restored herself to a posture where she can meet again, with a certain amount of external assistance, her commitments. Those doughty Scandinavians in Norway and Denmark have abandoned their classic policy of neutrality and can be counted upon as full partners in our defense of the West.

As you look at the Iberian peninsula, our position there is a difficult one. Although our understanding with Portugal is one that from a strategic standpoint is thoroughly satisfactory to us, the common cause which Portugal is inclined to make with Spain makes it necessary, aside from any other considerations, that in dealing with Spain we consider what the effect would be on Portugal. The negotiations which are now going on with the Franco government have not thus far been of a satisfactory character, but I think there is no reason not to expect that finally we will reach a moderately

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satisfactory and mutually agreeable conclusion.

Western Europe is not a real worry from the standpoint of foreign policy. The lines that we wish to follow are not only carefully laid down, but they have met with the approval and the cooperation of our partners in the venture. It is a matter of mechanics, it is a matter of implementation, assuming always that the will to go forward with this grand scheme persists not only among the people but in those governments which in some countries succeed themselves with such startling rapidity.

There is one encouraging feature in the Western European scene familiar to all of you. That is the progress toward integration, an integration which has already expressed itself through the commencement of operations of the Schuman Plan for the control of iron and steel amongst the six nations who have joined in that compact.

The European Defense Community will meet its fate one way or the other before the end of this year. The six parliaments concerned will vote for its ratification or its disapproval, and I believe it will be ratified. The subject of a political federation in Europe is already under discussion in an official manner. So I think we can look forward with some degree of assurance to a large number of people, greater actually than the population of our own country, more closely allied to us through ethnical strains, through a similar philosophy of life, through their skills, their aptitudes and in general their sharing of the ideal of freedom, so uniting themselves and the Western world that this Atlantic alliance will be able to constitute a bulwark not necessarily in balance of power terms but a bulwark of the Atlantic community which will give us a collective strength that neither we nor the British Empire nor any

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alliance that we have ever had in the past, even during the two World Wars, have ever enjoyed.

The reason for the importance of it is too apparent for me to dwell upon. It is trite to say there are just the great power conglomerations of those represented by the Soviet Union and by ourselves. The Soviet Union possesses one great advantage over us, centralized direction. When the order goes forth, whether it emanates from the Politburo, whether it is the offspring of Stalin himself and only himself matters very little. Once that order is given, not only do all the people of the states of Soviet Russia obey it, but it is equally obeyed in the satellite countries (and included in the satellite countries I place China and those ~~places~~ in the Far East where the Communist writ runs). The alliance of the West is a purely voluntary one. It is extraordinarily difficult at times to induce some of our associates to follow policies which seem to us, and even to a majority of the allies, to be advantageous. That is the democratic way. But we should not blink the fact that when we are engaged in a struggle, whether it be of power of philosophy struggle, our potential enemy possesses a great advantage, and our own efficiency has never been brought to full flower. Because of these differences, some of them even sentimental, which divide us, to an extent which is meaningless in principle, as regards the execution it has been difficult to bring the force of this great industrial and political combination into a cohesion which can match the dictatorial cohesion attained by the Russians.

Now if we leave Europe and have a look across the Mediteranean, we touch trouble spots. In North Africa, of course, the most dangerous are

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Tunisia and Morocco, both French protectorates. The French have promised autonomy to the peoples of those two countries. To attain autonomy requires on the part of the native peoples an ability to take over those powers of government which largely in the past have been managed by citizens of metropolitan France. At present a solution does not seem to be in immediate prospect. The French have offered to Tunisia a reform program which there is no indication that the extreme nationalists in Tunisia are prepared to accept. The question will come before the next meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations in October. What our own stand will be, we are not now prepared to say. We will have to consider the very rapidly changing circumstances as they transpire, but in general we are opposed to the Balkanization of North Africa. We believe that the presence of France in Tunisia and Morocco is necessary from a strategical point, and we believe a political accommodation can be reached if the spirit of accommodation and reason is displayed by both sides. The program proposed for Tunisia is an advance upon any which has ever been suggested before for the consideration of its ruler or its people, and many think it is reasonable enough to serve as a basis for commencement upon the road to autonomy.

The above is almost a quiescent problem, however, compared with what is going on in the Near East. I might say that respecting the rest of Africa, we have under constant scrutiny the difficulties which are likely to arise in the future because of the growth of nationalism all through that great continent, complicated still further by the depressing racial prospects which could so easily engender a bloody civil contest in South Africa. The independent countries of Liberia and Ethiopia are more and more prone to ally themselves with the Arabian and the Asiatic blocs in the United Nations. That again is an instance and a product of what I have called the growth of nationalism.

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Not often spoken of in America because we are not affording the same extent of aid or military assistance to that part of the world as we are doing elsewhere, is the fact that nationalism in Latin America is probably stronger than it has ever been. This leads in some respects to a sort of isolationism in certain nations in Latin America which has never been prominent before. Such isolationism is chiefly economic and fiscal in nature. It has created very grave difficulties for such countries as the Argentine, Chile, Bolivia and at the moment Brazil. The waves of nationalism which we are at times inclined to underestimate are not confined to any single area. It is probably the most potent forces which must be reckoned with in connection with our foreign relations outside of the continent of Europe.

In the Near East there have been two extraordinarily grave and troublesome spots. One is Egypt and the other is Iran. Fortunately, the Egyptian situation looks better. The control of the army appears for the time being assured. The understanding between the army and the civilian authorities in progressing as well as might be expected. Our interest there of course is to preserve tranquility, to have the Egyptians and the British arrive at an understanding which will at the very least guarantee the security of the Suez Canal. There is no use going further into that except to say that what would have seemed impossible six weeks ago is a reality today. We can only hope that these quiet conditions, or comparatively quiet conditions will continue to exist until some of the external problems of the country can be settled.

Iran is a horse of a different color. The nationalization of the properties of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, of course constitutes apart from any other consideration a very great blow to the United Kingdom's financial position -- a loss of about $300 million a year, which has to be

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made up elsewhere. Although it is true that the cutting off of this oil and the products into which it was refined has not gravely affected the oil trade of the world since the production has been filled from other fields, in the long run for many reasons it would be infinitely preferable to have the oil of Iran once again flowing in world commerce. As you know, there have been a succession of governments. The United States has been accused of not having departed sufficiently from the British line in regard to Iran. That is a complicated situation. I ask you again, as you contemplate these various difficulties which exist in the countries that I have mentioned, to add Iran to your list and to demand of ourselves if we did not attempt to bring the interests of the United Kingdom and of Persia into harmony in respect to the oil dispute, what alternative line of conduct could we usefully pursue which would enable us to play a part in preserving Iran from communism. I am glad to say to you in confidence that in the last few days certain events, certain negotiations have taken place which have seemed to indicate the possibility of ultimately resolving this extremely dangerous, this extremely vexatious dispute.

Now as to the rest of the Near East, our alleged sponsorship of the policies of Israel to the disregard of the feelings and rights of the Arabs, has undoubtedly -- we might as well face it as a fact--embittered most of the Arab world against the United States, not to a point where our prestige has sunk proportionate to the decline of British prestige in that area, but where our policies are regarded with a suspicion that was not apparent during the preceding two decades. That is not alone the cause, but is the one which officially is most often brought forth. In these countries of the Near East, the upsurge of nationalism has made the peoples more conscious of and more intolerant of the

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presence of a stranger than ever before. They are more reluctant to see any of the natural resources of their lands come under the management of foreigners, especially foreigners from the West.

There are three very dominant trends, all of which are traceable to this renascent or this new type of nationalism. One is anti-Western feeling; two is a distaste for, a dislike for, a revolt against the type of government which has in the past ruled most of those countries; third is a consciousness -- and one which tends to express itself in revolutions or sporadic uprisings -- of the great mass of citizens of those lands who patiently through centuries have put up with a standard of living so low as to deprive them not only of enjoyment in their present lives but of any particular hope that the lot of their descendants might be better. This has now resulted in the consciousness and aspiration for a better sort of life for the majority of peoples which is going to have grave repercussions for many years to come, not only in their domestic politics but in their relationships with the Western world. It is there that perhaps the Point 4 program and what it represents can prove to be most useful. It is necessary that in thinking about policies for the future, we ought to consider whether such a program should not be greatly expanded or whether within its present limits it should not be directed to other ends.

Again I will leave for your consideration this question: In dealing with what is really a revolution as regards at least their own political domestic considerations in the Near East, should such aid as is given by the United States be directed to improvement of a permanent character from which wealth may ultimately flow or should it be directed to teaching the peoples of those lands techniques which over a period of time will enable them to arrive at a point where they will institute or construct their own permanent improvements which all agree to be necessary. We simply cannot do everything.

Nationalism has also complicated our relationships with those two great countries in South Asia, Pakistan and India. They have set up governments which are attempting to control people who have been for hundreds of years divided from each other by religion, by the caste system, by different status of one kind or another, by extremes of riches and poverty. At the moment between India and Pakistan there is a great dispute over the final allocation of Kashmir. In this delicate battle, because it has attained almost the proportions of one, the United States has attempted to act as mediator. The parties are once again conferring with each other, and Dr. Graham, the representative of the United Nations, is making what may be a last attempt to bring about a solution which would seem reasonable. But there you have on the one hand a nation of 400 million peoples and on the other hand a nation of 80 million people who are spending a majority of their incomes, and those insufficient, to maintain armaments not to be used against communism, not to be used in association with other allies, but for possible use against each other because of this difference of opinion as to how Kashmir should eventually be divided. That is a true situation of weakness from our standpoint.

There are reasons why we could not have expected either India or Pakistan to have joined in any collective security pacts. Southeast Asia is dangerous beyond measure. The key to it, of course, is Indo-China. If Indo-China were lost, there is little doubt that Thailand and Burma would follow, that Malaya eventually could not be held. There are 30,000 British troops in Malaya engaged in trying to suppress what is essentially a guerrilla action on the part of the Communists, mostly Chinese. India would undoubtedly

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be affected in greater degree than she already has been by the Communists in her midst. What happened in India would prescribe the pattern of what would take place in Pakistan. Indonesia is already struggling with the grave problems of a new country with a huge population, with wonderful raw materials which she exports to the outside world, but insufficiently staffed to cope with Communistic attack if all of Southeast Asia were lost. She needs some years, probably a good many years before she will be able to handle her affairs with that efficiency which we so ardently desire for her. This is not said in criticism of Indonesia. The same reflection would apply to all countries which have newly won their independence. I would say that anyone who has read the story of our initial attempts at self-government among our original Thirteen Colonies would come to the conclusion that one must have a period of peace in which to develop those skills and governmental aptitudes which are necessary for a nation which has lately achieved independence.

In Indo-China, looking at it purely from the American standpoint, the most desirable thing that could take place would be of course the extirpation of those Communists, or else their conversion, who are now waging war against the French Union and the Associated States. The most important concomitant of that would be the withdrawal of the 200,000 troops of the French Union army who, if added to the NATO forces in the West would transform the military situation there to a very marked degree. The most hopeful aspect bearing upon this point is the continued buildup of the armies of the Associated States with the material assistance which the French and ourselves have for some years been furnishing.

I will say just a word about the Far East. The policy of the United States Government at the present time in regard to Formosa is under constant

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scrutiny. Formosa fundamentally is being secured by the 7th Fleet. There are many who feel the Chinese Communists could not successfully attack Formosa. I will again ask you a question. You might well consider whether as the Chinese Nationalist troops become more adequately armed they could effect a lodgment on the mainland of China, whether they could maintain themselves on the mainland of China without massive support from the United States not only with air, naval and logistical assistance, but by the injection into the struggle of American ground troops. Until that question is answered, any policy relating to the ability of Chinese National troops to occupy the mainland is purely theoretical. Our policy is to build up those units of China without having determined upon the specific future use to which they may be put.

Now if I can pose one more question in secrecy, it is this: There has been a great deal of discussion from time to time as to whether Chinese Nationalist troops should be sent to Korea to join in the activities there. Generally, I think one could reach the conclusion that if that were done, number one, it would have an adverse effect on the other nations of Asia. Secondly, would it be preferable, or would it not, to have Chinese troops there rather than to build up more troops of the Republic of Korea forces? If one chose the latter road, since equipment is not so plentiful that it can be given to everybody, I ask you a further question: Is it more advisable to have a native army which is going to remain in its own country indefinitely, or is it better to have troops brought in from the outside who can be withdrawn from that country if peaceful conditions ever persist there and who can be used elsewhere to serve.

As to Japan, the restoration of her sovereignty, like the incorp-

oration of the Federal Republic of Germany into the Atlantic alliance, which I haven't mentioned because you are all so familiar with it, is probably the most significant thing which has occurred in the Far East from a purely political standpoint. The beginning of a solution of the German problem, the orientation, the attraction of Western Germany to the Atlantic community is the most important thing which has happened in the West.

The Philippines -- for the moment we have no worries. The Huk uprisings, or the Huk insurgency apparently is being mastered and it no longer constitutes a threat.

General Craig, I have wandered and scampered around the globe, and I have exhausted something in excess of forty-five minutes. I realize this is extremely superficial, necessarily so, but if I could answer any questions addressed to specifics, I would be very happy to do it. Thank you.